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Ministry of Advanced Education

## UBC OFFERING NEW CELL AND DEVELOPMENTAL BIOLOGY PROGRAM

VANCOUVER – The University of British Columbia is now offering master's and doctoral degrees in cell and developmental biology, Advanced Education Minister Murray Coell announced today.

The field of cell and developmental biology is the study of how cells develop, function and communicate with each other. Using genetic, molecular and other information, researchers also study the basic mechanisms that regulate how complex, multicellular plants and animals develop and grow.

"Cell and developmental biology is a frontier science with applications ranging from agriculture to diseases associated with aging," said Coell. "The development of graduate programs in this area helps maintain B.C.'s place at the forefront of cutting-edge research."

Students will investigate diseases such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease and stroke, plus diseases and developmental disorders of the immune and nervous systems by investigating how plants and animals interact with their environments to adapt to changes that affect their development and ability to function.

As part of UBC's interdisciplinary approach to study and research, the new programs are designed to build collaboration between researchers and students in different fields. Students will work alongside researchers in the university's new Life Sciences Institute and other UBC sites, combining specialized knowledge and technologies to understand complex questions

"These new degree programs incorporate contributions from people working in multiple departments and faculties," said Dr. John Church, director of the new program. "Students will benefit from the combined expertise of the broader community of researchers investigating living organisms."

The two new graduate programs are offered through UBC's College for Interdisciplinary Studies (CFIS), bringing the total of interdisciplinary programs UBC has developed to 12.

Since 2003, the ministry has approved 150 new undergraduate and graduate degree programs. The new degrees are helping B.C. improve its competitiveness and productivity through education and skills training.

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